

From: David Goldschmidt
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/28/02 8:29pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Gentlemen:

I strongly object to the proposed settlement with Microsoft. It's less than a rap on the knuckles to the company which has been completely stifling competition in user software for over a decade.

Microsoft's anti-competitive approach to its business is most clearly shown by it's abhorrence of internet standards. The company line is that they are "improving the standard and making the products better for consumers." This is total nonsense. They know that open standards promote competition and make for a more level playing field. This is anathema, of course. What they want, and have so far been able to achieve for the most part, is to make all common data formats Microsoft proprietary. The way to do this is to make their internal data formats as complicated and difficult to understand as possible. This makes it more difficult for potential competitors to make their products compatible with Microsoft products.

One technique in particular which they use to obfuscate very effectively is executable content. Like all their other so-called "innovations", this is yet another attempt to prevent other software developers from marketing compatible products. It has also turned out to be a security nightmare for the internet. This detestable policy of purposefully over-complicating data formats by including executable code is by far the single most significant security problem on the internet. It has enabled worms and viruses to proliferate ad nauseum. It has cost business and industry billions of dollars.

The latest strategy is to try to dominate the web by inducing developers to use Microsoft web development tools which, of course, generate web pages which only work with Internet Explorer. This simultaneously puts the other browsers out of business and forces the remaining developers to pay big bucks for the Microsoft development tools.

There is zero benefit to consumers in all of this, Microsoft's pious claims to the contrary notwithstanding. The company must be broken up and its monopoly power eliminated once and for all.

Very truly yours,

David M. Goldschmidt